

What is claimed is:

1. A system for managing the intercommunication of provisioning-related data between interconnected provisioning systems in an interactive television network, comprising:

an ITV Provisioning Manager device;

5 at least one ITV Network Component and its associated provisioning system connected to said ITV Provisioning Manager device; and

at least one ITV Client Device connected to the at least one ITV Network Component.

2. The system according to claim 1, wherein the at least one ITV Network Component and its associated provisioning system connected to said ITV Provisioning Manager includes at least one communications network.

3. The system according to claim 1, wherein the at least one ITV Network Component and its associated provisioning system connected to said ITV Provisioning Manager includes at least one Billing System.

4. The system according to claim 1, wherein the at least one ITV Network Component and its associated provisioning system connected to said ITV Provisioning Manager includes at least one ITV Server.

5. The system according to claim 2, wherein the at least one communications network is a wired or wireless communications network.

6. The system according to claim 5, wherein the at least one communications network includes a packet data network.

7. The system according to claim 6, wherein the packet data network includes an IP data packet network.

8. The system according to claim 6, wherein the packet data network includes an ATM network.

9. The system according to claim 5, wherein the at least one communications network includes a circuit-oriented switched telephone network.

10. The system according to claim 3, wherein the at least one billing system includes an ITV billing system.

11. The system according to claim 4, wherein the at least ITV Server includes at least one of the following: an e-mail server, an address book server, a calendar server, a search server, a registration server, a web server, and an E-chat server.

12. The system according to claim 2, wherein the at least one ITV Client Device connected to the at least one ITV Network Component includes a set-top video/audio converter decoder box.

13. The system according to claim 2, wherein the at least one ITV Client Device connected to the at least one ITV Network Component includes a television set.

14. The system according to claim 2, wherein the at least one ITV Client Device connected to the at least one ITV Network Component includes a device which processes video, audio or data signals for transmission, storage, visual display or sound emission.

15. A method of managing the provisioning of interactive client devices for connection to an interactive television network for using interactive television services, comprising:

receiving from a billing system a registration code number and associated billing
5 system identification data relating to at least one subscriber, the registration code number being associated with billing system identification data identifying said at least one subscriber, said billing system identification data describing the billing information and services preferences of said at least one subscriber;

10 storing said registration code number and associated billing system identification data in a provisioning management database;

retrieving said billing system identification data in said provisioning management database; and

communicating said billing system identification data to the provisioning system of an IP data network.

16. The method according to claim 15, further comprising:

receiving IP registration information including one or more network addresses from the provisioning system of the IP data network; and

storing said IP registration information in the provisioning management database.

17. The method according to claim 16, further comprising:

retrieving said IP registration information in said provisioning management database;

and

communicating said IP registration information to the billing system.

18. An apparatus for managing the intercommunication of provisioning-related data between interconnected provisioning systems in an interactive television network, comprising:

a data storage device for storing provisioning-related data;

5 at least one provisioning message interface;

an operator interface;

a controller, connected with the data storage device, the at least one provisioning message interface, and the operator interface, that transmits and receives provisioning-related data messages, via the at least one provisioning message interface, to and from the provisioning system of the at least one ITV Network Component, and stores a record of said data messages in the data storage device.

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19. The apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the at least one provisioning message interface is an XML interface, connecting the apparatus with a provisioning system of at least one subscriber management billing system.

20. The apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the at least one provisioning message interface is an XML interface type, connecting the apparatus with a provisioning system of at least one communications network.

21. The apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the at least one provisioning message interface is an XML interface, connecting the apparatus with a provisioning system of at least one ITV Server.

22. A method of managing the provisioning of interactive client devices for connection to an interactive television network for using interactive television services, comprising:

receiving from a first ITV network component service information relating to at least
5 one subscriber, the service information identifying said at least one subscriber and describing at least one service preference of said at least one subscriber;

determining which of a plurality of other ITV network components are to receive at least some of the service information;

communicating the at least some of the service information to at least one other ITV
10 network component, the at least one other ITV component network being different from the first ITV network component and providing a service requested by the at least one subscriber;

receiving from the at least one other ITV network component service providing
information, the service providing information enabling the subscriber to access the service
15 provided by the at least one other ITV component; and

providing the service providing information to the subscriber.

23. The method according to claim 22, further comprising:

storing said service information in a provisioning management database;

retrieving said service information in said provisioning management database; and

communicating said service information to a provisioning system of an ITV network
5 component.

24. The method according to claim 22, further comprising:
storing said service providing information in a provisioning management database;
retrieving said service providing information in said provisioning management
database; and

5 providing the service providing information to an ITV network component.

25. The method according to claim 22, further comprising:
providing the service providing information to an ITV network component that is a
billing system.

26. The method according to claim 22, wherein the service providing information
includes one or more network addresses from the provisioning system of an IP data network.

27. A system for managing the provisioning of interactive client devices for connection to an interactive television network for using interactive television services, comprising:

first receiving means for receiving from a first ITV network component service
5 information relating to at least one subscriber, the service information identifying said at least one subscriber and describing at least one service preference of said at least one subscriber;

determining means for determining which of a plurality of other ITV network components are to receive at least some of the service information;

10 communicating means for communicating the at least some of the service information to at least one other ITV network component, the at least one other ITV network component being different from the first ITV network component and providing a service requested by the at least one subscriber;

second receiving means for receiving from the at least one other ITV network
15 component service providing information, the service providing information enabling the subscriber to access the service provided by the at least one other ITV component; and

providing means for providing the service providing information to the subscriber.

28. The system according to claim 27, further comprising:

storing means for storing said service information in a provisioning management database;

retrieving means for retrieving said service information in said provisioning
5 management database; and

communicating means for communicating said service information to a provisioning
system of an ITV network component.

29. The system according to claim 22, further comprising:

storing means for storing said service providing information in a provisioning
management database;

retrieving means for retrieving said service providing information in said
5 provisioning management database; and

providing means for providing the service providing information to an ITV network
component.

30. The system according to claim 22, further comprising:

providing means for providing the service providing information to an ITV network
component that is a billing system.

31. The system according to claim 22, wherein the service providing information
includes one or more network addresses from the provisioning system of an IP data network.